KVKs in A.P.

3521. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Acharya N.G. Ranga Agriculture University for establishment of new Vigyan Kendras in some tobacco producing districts in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating, *inter alia*, the purpose for which new Kendras are proposed, expenditure involved therein, the particulars of districts in which new Kendras are proposed to be established, etc.;

(c) whether the State Chief Minister had written a letter to the Union Minister for Agriculture in this respect;

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(e) by when the sanction is likely to be accorded for establishment of the aforesaid Kendras?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal includes establishment of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in six districts of Andhra Pradesh, viz., Adilabad, Nizamabad, Khamam, Prakasam, Cuddappah and Krishna to take up the activities like technology assessment and refinement and training of farmers and grass root level extension functionaries.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh also requested for establishment of KVKs in those six districts.

(d) and (e) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) have sanctioned for strengthening the existing Zonal Agricultural Research Stations (ZARS) of the University to take up the additional functions of KVK in three districts including Adilabad and Prakasam. In view of two KVKs located in Kurnool district with the total allocation of 74.71 lakhs for each of the districts, the functioning of the KVK at Nandyal with the university has been readjusted to take up its activities in the adjoining Cuddappah district. The proposal for a KVK in Krishna district has been agreed in principle, the establishment of which shall depend on the approval of the competent authority at various

levels. There is no proposal for establishing of KVK in Nizamabad and Khamam districts at present.

Special cell for HP apple farmers

†3522. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to form a special cell for the farmers of Himachal Pradesh to provide them fair price of apples so that they are protected from private institutions; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Impact of import of edible oils

3523. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the shifting of palm oil to open licence category and the reduction of its import duty from 25 per cent to 15 per cent have resulted in increase in the import of edible oils, including palm oil;

(b) whether the proposed import of 70 million of palm oil from Malaysia would also destroy the coconut farming, especially in Kerala;

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government on both the issues; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Following are the reasons for increase in the import of edible oils including palm oil:—

(i) Bringing the import of edible oil including palm oil under Open General Licence (OGL).

(ii) Drastic decline in the international prices of edible oils including palm oil.

(iii) Successive reduction in import duties from 65% in 1994 to 15% in July, 1998.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.